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THE HISTORY OF EARLY EDUCATION

V. THE ARYAN RACES CONTINUED — THE HELLENIC RACE.*

CHAPTER I.

Assuming that the reader has already a fair acquaintance with Hellenic history, I shall here restrict myself to the exhibition of those great and leading characteristics of life, religion, and art, to which it is absolutely necessary to refer if we would understand the education of the Greeks. If my remarks are somewhat curt and summary, you must remember that the space at our disposal is very limited and the subject large. It is impossible to sum up adequately the leading characteristics and racial tendencies of the Greeks in one lecture, but I shall endeavor so to generalize these as to make the tendency and aim of their education intelligible.

I have in view the highest type of the Hellenic spirit—the Athenian.

Look first at the map of the eastern Mediterranean.

The physical characteristics of the home of the Hellenic races—the variety of scenery which was to be found in a land broken up, as theirs was, by mountain, stream, and sea, and the pure and hilarious influences of the atmosphere were all of a kind to promote the development of a cheerful, bright, life-loving people. The early separation of the common stock into tribes speaking different dialects, and the establishment, on the shores of the Mediterranean, of numerous separate little kingdoms in and around towns since famed in history and in song, tended to sep-

* IMPORTANT DATES IN THE HISTORY OF GREECE.

Trojan War, 1183, B. C. (?); Homer, 1000, B. C.; Spartan power dominant in the Peloponnesus, 650 B. C.; Athens—Legislation of Solon, 590, B. C.; Persian invasion and battle of Marathon, 490, B. C.; Invasion by Xerxes, burning of Athens, and battle of Salamis, 480, B. C.; Battle of Platea, 479, B. C.; Supremacy of Athens, Peloponnesian War, 431 to 404, B. C.; Defeat of Athens and supremacy of Sparta, 404, B. C.; Spartan wars with Persia and Darius; Divisions of Greece; Ascendancy of Philip of Macedon over Greece, 338, B. C.; Alexander the Great; Greece made a Roman province, 146, B. C.

arate a population which was substantially one. Hence, in consequence of the numerous centres of civic life, that rapid growth of independence and the spirit of freedom which characterized the Greek. This was already innate, doubtless, in the Hellenic character, but it was fostered into an almost feverish activity by their circumstances social, geographical, and political. What a contrast do they present to the Egyptian, Chinese, and Semitic national communities!

Here among the Greeks you have all the Persian grace and humanity; their courage and manliness, their enjoyment of life and of moral freedom; but all these issuing from a deeper nature, instinct with a broader sympathy with humanity, and, above all, animated by an intense intellectuality. In Homer *—the first and greatest representative of the Hellenic spirit—you have all these characteristics so early as about 1,000 years B. C.; for Homer seems to have sung somewhere about 180 years after the Trojan War, to which the date of 1183 B. C. is usually assigned. These poems (which, as has been truly said, form the end not the beginning of a poetical period), so rich in their humanity, so full of character, of simple and naïve, yet penetrating reflexion, so abounding in romance, and so overflowing with fulness of life and energy, give the key to the Hellenic character and formed the basis of all Greek literature;—nay, we may say of all European literature. They were committed to memory by the Hellenic boys and studied by the Hellenic youth, who saw in Achilles a type of free and war-like Greece, learned to revere age and experience in Nestor, to recognise in the portraiture of the great Agamemnon, the necessity of leadership even for free men and democrats, and to appreciate the oratory and the astute policy of Ulysses—a foreshadowing of a potent factor in the life of the interplotting Hellenic states. A people with such a start in national life could not but be great in arts, literature, and arms if their racial genius was truly represented by their great poet. His teaching fell, as we know, on fruitful soil; and his verses were received and cherished as divine, inspired utterances.

We take *Homer* then, instead of the Confucian books, as in the case of China, or the Rig-Veda and Code of Manu, as in the case

* It does not matter to us whether one man wrote the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* or not.

of the Hindu, or the Zend-Avesta, in the case of the Persians, to be the starting-point of the inner life of the Greeks. A natural humanity broad and various, instead of religious conceptions, lies at the heart of Greek genius. Homer was the first expositor of this humanity and through all Greek and even Roman education the Iliad and Odyssey formed the minds of the young. So late as Quintilian in the first century of the Christian era we find the use of Homer and Virgil in the elementary schools recommended, deliberately recommended by the most competent of all educational authorities. "It has accordingly been an excellent custom (he says, I. 8.) that reading should commence with Homer and Virgil, although to understand their merits there is need of a maturer judgment; but for the acquisition of judgment there is abundance of time, for they will not be read once only. In the meantime let the mind of the pupil be exalted with the sublimity of the heroic verse, conceive ardour from the magnitude of the subjects, and be imbued with the noblest sentiments."

It is in Homer also that we find the earliest indications of Hellenic education. In the 9th Book of the Iliad, Phœnix, when supplicating Achilles to lay aside his wrath, recalls that his father, Peleus, when he sent him to the war, committed him to his care.

"The Royal Peleus, when from Phthia's coast
He sent thee early to the Achaian Host,—
Thy youth, as then in sage debates unskilled
And new to perils of the direful field;—
He bade me teach thee all the ways of war,
To shine in councils and in camps to dare."

And again he recalls to Achilles how he, when a refugee with Peleus, had acted as his tutor:—

"In Phthia's court at last my labours end,
Your sire received me, as his son caressed,
With gifts enriched, and with possessions blessed.

By love to thee his bounties I repaid,
And early wisdom to thy soul conveyed:
Brave as thou art, *my* lessons made thee brave,
A child I took thee, but a hero gave."

If we would understand Greece, then, we must start from Homer. If we do not read, and, while reading, become alive to

his charm, we shall never know anything about the great Hellenic race.

The most attractive outcome of Greek genius in political and social institutions was to be found in Athens—"The Eye of Greece." It is of Athens and the Athenians that Thucydides thus speaks through the mouth of Pericles, giving us a picture of an ideal civic community, which we can easily connect with the Homeric conceptions of life:—

"It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognised; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private intercourse we are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbour if he does what he likes; we do not put on sour looks at him which, though harmless, are not pleasant. While we are thus unconstrained in our private intercourse, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented from doing wrong by respect for authority and for the laws, having an especial regard to those which are ordained for the protection of the injured, as well as to those unwritten laws which bring upon the transgressor of them the reprobation of the general sentiment.

"And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; at home the style of our life is refined; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish melancholy.

"Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us: so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as of our own.

"Then, again, our military training is in many respects superior to that of our adversaries. Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret, if revealed to an

enemy, might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they (the Spartans) from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face.

“Then, we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avoid poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the State because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs not as a harmless but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges, of a policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance but hesitate upon reflection. And they are really to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense, both of the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger.

“I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the State. For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to her fame.” (Jowett’s translation.)

These words of Thucydides portray, as I have said, an almost ideal political community towards which, indeed, we hope that our modern life is tending. Strange it may seem that a civic constitution even though falling short of this ideal, as Athens most certainly did, could not sustain itself forever. The decline and fall of Greece yields probably as profound political lessons as the “De-

cline and Fall of Rome" even in the hands of the stately and all-comprehending Gibbon.

In connexion with the Greek polity, however, let us never forget that when we talk of the Greeks, we talk not of the whole of the inhabitants of Hellas who spoke Greek, but of the aristocracy of free citizens. These rested on a large body of slaves who performed all manual and menial work—captives in war, or persons purchased at slave markets or the descendants of slaves. Though well treated, they had no civic rights to speak of.

RELIGION.

The religion of the Greeks partook of the humanity of their civil life. There was here no Semitic gloom, no awe, no abasement of human personality before an unseen power of possibly sinister intentions. It was a worship of the beautiful—of art, *i. e.*, the ideal in nature and human life. Their gods did not symbolize the mere powers of nature and the worship was not an element worship, though doubtless it rested on a primæval adoration of the forces and forms of nature—earth, sun, moon, dawn, spring, and so forth. The gods as we find them in their specific Hellenic development were the perfect expressions of *human thought* regarding the powers that worked in nature and in man. They truly worshipped their own ideals in these gods, that is to say, the divine element in man, and so may be in a sense, said to have worshipped a glorified yet supernatural humanity.

On this subject Hegel says in his "Philosophy of History": "It must be observed that the Greek gods are to be regarded as individualities, not abstractions, like "Knowledge," "Unity," "Time," "Heaven," "Necessity." Such abstractions do not form the substance of these divinities: they are no allegories, no abstract beings to which various attributes are attached like the Horatian. As little are the divinities symbols, for a symbol is only a sign, an adumbration of something else. The Greek gods express of themselves what they are. The eternal repose and clear intelligence that dignifies the head of Apollo is not a symbol, but the expression in which spirit manifests itself and shows itself present. The gods are personalities, concrete individualities: an allegorical being has no qualities, but is itself one quality and no more. The gods are moreover special characters, since in each of them one peculiarity predominates as the char-

acteristic one; but it would be vain to try to bring this circle of characters into a system. Zeus perhaps may be regarded as ruling the other gods, but not with substantial power,—so that they are left free to their own idiosyncrasies. Since the whole range of spiritual and moral qualities was appropriated by the gods, the Unity which stood above them all necessarily remained abstract; it was therefore formless and unmeaning Fate (the absolute constitution of things)—Necessity, whose oppressive character arises from the absence of the spiritual in it; whereas the gods hold a friendly relation to men, for they are spiritual natures. That higher thought—the knowledge of unity as God—the One Spirit—lay beyond that grade of thought to which the Greeks had attained.” (Hegel, “The Greek World”—page 256.) The only exception that can be taken to this statement is as to the “substantial” power of Zeus. See *Iliad* Bk. viii, 1–27.

Mr. J. Brown Patterson also well says: “The distinguishing characteristic of the religion thus created by the free operation of the human faculties, was naturally the freedom and the fulness of the display which it contained of human nature. It sought the causes of all being and all change, in moving principles similar to those which operate in human breasts; and in doing so it seems to have had no principle of selection either metaphysical or moral. Whatever was palpable in man it made ideal in the divinity. Accordingly we find the fulness and richness of human nature in the gods—the Hellenic worship was in truth the worship of humanity. To the Hellenic conception every thing beautiful was holy; every thing pleasant to man was acceptable to the gods.”

The pervading spirit of the Hellenic religion has been best expressed in Schiller’s famous poem entitled “The Gods of Greece,” of which I may quote a few verses:

When o’er the form of naked Truth
The Muse had spread her magic veil,
Creation throbbed with life and youth
And feeling warmed the insensible.
Then Nature, formed for Love’s embrace,
The earth in brighter glory trod;
All was enchanted ground, each trace
The footstep of a god.

But Nature now, undeified,
Unwitting of the joys she gives,
Unconscious of her former pride
And of the soul that in her lives,
Regardless of her Maker's praise
And dead to human sympathy,
Like a dull pendulum, obeys
The law of gravity.

Your gay religions knew no sadness :
They banished each austere emotion ;
What bosom could but throb with gladness,
When gladness was the best devotion ?
Whate'er was sacred then was fair ;
No pleasure feared the eye of God
Where roamed the blushing Muses, where
The Graces still abode.

Your temples smiled like palace-halls ;
And there ye held your dazzling court
On many-wreathed festivals,
Midst thundering cars and hero-sport ;
And oft the sweet soul-breathing sound,
Of dance begirt your altars fair,
Each brow with bright love-garlands bound,
Deep-wreathed in dewy hair.*

That there was a deeper vein of religious thought in the Hellenic mind is, however, true. The Eleusinian mysteries,† and the tragic drama give evidence of this; but it does not seem to have touched the popular heart deeply.

* Translated by John Brown Patterson.

† Doctrines of a mystico-religious kind believed to have been introduced from Egypt and preserved by a priestly family or families at Eleusis. The chief temple was afterwards in Athens, but Eleusis never lost the distinction which associated the mysteries specially with it. Any Greek might be initiated who was prepared to go through all the necessary ceremonies. The precise nature of the doctrine revealed is not known. I am not aware that modern research has gone beyond Thirlwall's conclusion: "They were the remains of a worship which preceded the rise of the Hellenic mythology and its attendant rites, grounded on a view of nature less fanciful, more earnest and better fitted to awaken both philosophical thought and religious feeling." (*History of Greece* II., 140.) Some more recent inquirers seem to think that there was little in the so-called "mysteries." On the other hand it is not impossible that they had Semitic relations.

It is to the philosophers and dramatists of Greece that we owe those deeper inquiries into the origin of things and the nature of man which elsewhere were a derivation from sacred books and the monopoly of a priestly order. The sacred books of the Greeks were the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the poets generally held an almost prophetic place. The lay spirit dominated, the sacerdotal was almost non-existent. But it is evident that their more thoughtful men, even as from the time of Homer, recognised a supreme God among the gods—Zeus, the father of gods and men—the all-powerful. In his supreme hands lay the order of the world and absolute justice. Blue-eyed Athena was the idealized expression of his wisdom—to her he yields, and bright-haired Apollo of his oracular decrees. Apollo, the god of light, saviour, purifier and redeemer, whose cultus, says Tiele, exercised on the religious, moral and social life of the Greeks so profound and salutary an influence. The fact of death inevitable and of human suffering, so often to all appearance unjust, was a deep problem for the Greeks, as it has been for all thoughtful races. Behind the awful throne of Jove himself the Greek recognised the dark and fateful form of destiny, working out for gods as well as for men their lives and fortunes—answerable to no other person, caring for none. And yet it sometimes appeared that Zeus was powerful enough to be a factor in Fate. A thread of mystery and awe accordingly ran through the web of the Greek life, but their joyous and active nature, their constant struggle in politics, war, literature, art, and philosophy, accompanied by an all-prevailing gymnastic, enabled them practically to ignore all this; and to treat these ultimate questions, as I have said, chiefly through the imagination, and not as the supreme realities in the problem of existence. Sacerdotalism was alien to this cast of thought and life. The temples were simply the house of the god to whom they were dedicated and the priest (except in the case of some families that had hereditary rights) was elected and might be changed from time to time, returning to the civil life from which he had been taken. The priest's duty was chiefly that of a caretaker and of a regulator of the manner of offering sacrifices on special occasions, and aiding the offerings and sacrifices which others came to make. The oracular utterances at certain temples like Dodona and Delphi, (for centuries the centre of Greek religious thought

and guide of its political life) revealing the will of the god or future events, and the magical cures in some Æsculapian temples are the only characteristics of religion which connect the Greeks with the superstitious beliefs of oriental nations. The most recent conclusions point to a Semitic element in the religion of the Greeks, but these elements were themselves Hellenized.

But although there was no priesthood or church in the modern sense, there was a full recognition of the gods in the great incidents of domestic life,—birth, marriage, and death; and even at banquets the libations connected the banqueters with present gods. But all these ceremonies seemed to have had an artistic quite as much as a religious character in the sense which other nations understood religion. The relation of the Greek to his gods was an easy, pleasant, and friendly one. Natures so bright and joyous were not likely to dwell on the mysterious and awful in religion save through the imagination.

To sum up in the words of Hegel, "The essence of the Greek religion is the spiritual itself, and the natural is only the point of departure. But, on the other hand, it must be observed that the divinity of the Greeks is not yet the *absolute* free spirit, but spirit in a particular mode fettered by the limitations of humanity—still dependent as a determinate individuality on external conditions. Individualities objectively beautiful are the gods of the Greeks."

As regards a future state, Tiele points out that it was a mark of the ethical character of the Delphic religion that it taught a future state of retribution, but this was never a distinct popular belief though taught by the poets.

ART.

The above quotation from Hegel leads by an easy transition to the subject of Greek art in sculpture and architecture.

The religion of the "Beautiful and Joyous" received fit expression not merely in the statues of the Greeks, but also in their sacred houses, the remains of which are still a wonder and joy to mankind because of their severe charm and refined simplicity. It is easy to see that Greek art and Greek religion were necessarily one: both were the expression of the same ideal conceptions.

"How grand and chaste is the Greek temple!" says Hettner, "so simple in its beauty, so solemn in its repose, so divine in its

serenity! It is not like our churches,—a place of assembly for the devout congregation; it contains only the statue of the god to whom it is consecrated, and his sacred treasures and votive offerings. It stands, therefore, quite apart from every profane environment. An encircling wall guards a wide, sacred precinct; and in the midst of this rises, with far-seen splendour of marble and of gold, the house of the god. Nor may it stand on the common earth, trod by the feet of mortal man. Broad and mighty it is true, the fair structure stretches along the ground as the natural basis of existence: but three mighty strata of steps lift it above the level of every day reality, and bear it, like a great votive gift, towards heaven. The god who dwells within the cella is no dark forbidding deity; he is a god of joy and perpetual serenity—a god of light. To embrace the light and air, the portico throws itself wide; and all round runs a colonnade, connecting the narrow dwelling of the god with the happy outer world. Joyous in their living, elastic strength, rise these pillars. The counterpressure of the superstructure which it is their purpose to support, receives and checks them as they ascend. Above them rest the superincumbent beams of the ceiling; and over these thrones the lofty roof drooping on both sides its broad overshadowing wings as if to warn and compel the soaring and aspiring pillars to remain contented with the solid sufficient earth, the fair divine ‘Now,’ and seek no beyond. It is this solution of opposing forces, this aspiration which with glad and willing self-control returns within its natural limits, this living, satisfied and harmonious repose which reflects on the mind of the beholder such a grateful calm. The enjoyment we have in the intelligent contemplation of a Greek temple is a homage to and a celebration of the divine, eternal *Sophrosyne*.”

A speaker, representing Egypt in one of Professor Ebers’ novels, says: “There is such a great difference between the Greek and Egyptian works of art. When I went into our own gigantic temples to pray I always felt as if I must prostrate myself in the dust before the greatness of the gods, and entreat them not to crush so insignificant a worm; but in the temple of Hera at Samos, I could only raise my hands to heaven in joyful thanksgiving that the gods had made the earth so beautiful. In Egypt I always believed as I had been taught: ‘Life is a sleep; we

shall not awake to our true existence in the kingdom of Osiris till the hour of death;' but in Greece I thought:—'I am born to live and to enjoy this cheerful, bright, and blooming world.'"

Such, in brief, is the Greek religion as realized in their art—the natural and necessary expression of their religion.

Pheidias, the greatest of Greek artists, wrought statues designed to give a moral, lofty idea of deity. "In the Athena of the Parthenon and the Zeus of Olympia and the ancient tragedy, the religion of the Hellenes reached the climax of its development. The ideal humanization of deity for which the way was prepared by the cultus of the Delphic Apollo was perfected at Athens by Æschylus, Sophocles, and Pheidias." (Tiele.)

Observe, next, how the same ideas entered into their conception of man himself. A perfect body, the easy and unencumbered vehicle of a free and happy spirit, was the object of their admiration. The Olympic dust was the richest treasure which a young Greek could gather. Speaking of the harmonious athletic of the Greeks, Hettner says, "Let us follow all Greece to the great centre of national unity, the plain of Olympia." Here the victor was raised to the elevation of the gods themselves. "Poets, like Simonides and Pindar, sang immortal songs of victory in his praise; the best cities were anxious that he should be enrolled among their citizens; and when he reached his home, the gate and part of the city wall were pulled down in token that a city which produced such men needed not the protection of walls. The conquerer entered in festive procession drawn by four white horses, proudly clad in purple and wearing on his head the olive wreath he had won."

"Putting these wonderful facts in array before our minds," says the same writer, "we cannot fail to feel deeply how wide the difference between the moral basis on which Greek antiquity rests and our modes of life and thought in modern times. We men of to-day can hardly even see how the Greeks, the most intellectual nation the world has seen, could make their highest national festival a gymnastic one, far less can we sympathise with or imagine ourselves actually taking part in this truly Bacchic enthusiasm for the Olympic victor."

And for what did they contend? Not for so many guineas as in these degenerate modern times, but for glory alone—their suc-

cess being signalized by a reward in itself worthless:—"at the Olympic games, an olive-crown or garland; at the Isthmian, one of pine; at the Nemean, one of parsley; at the Pythian, apples from the trees sacred to Apollo; and at the Panathenæa, olives from the tree of Minerva." (Lucian Anach.)

"If we look at the inner nature of these sports," says Hegel, "we shall first observe how sport itself is opposed to serious business, to dependence and need. This wrestling, running, contending, was no serious affair; bespoke no obligation of defence, no necessity of combat. Serious occupation is labour that has reference to some want. I or nature must succumb: if the one is to continue, the other must fall. In contrast with this kind of seriousness, however, sport presents the higher seriousness: for in it nature is wrought into spirit, and although in these contests the subject has not advanced to the highest grade of serious thought, yet, in this exercise of his physical powers, man shews his freedom, viz.: that he has transformed his body to an organ of spirit."

The Greek exaltation of courage, their love of country, their intense personality, their freedom of political life, prepared them for a great world-task which it fell to them to perform in the interests of civilization and human progress. Even in the time of the great Cyrus they endeavoured to throw their shield over their brothers on the Asiatic coast. They drove back the whole oriental power led against them by Xerxes in person, and by so doing laid the whole future of humanity under eternal obligations. Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Salamis are imperishable names. "Thus was Greece freed," says Hegel, "from the pressure which threatened to overwhelm it."

"Greater battles unquestionably have been fought; but these live immortal not in the historical records of nations only, but also of science and art—of the noble and the moral generally. For these are world-historical victories; they were the salvation of culture and spiritual vigour, and they rendered the Asiatic principle powerless. How often, on other occasions, have not men sacrificed every thing for one grand object! How often have not warriors fallen for duty and country! But here we are called on to admire, not only valour, genius, and spirit, but the purport of the contest—the effect, the result, which are unique in

their kind. In other battles a particular interest is predominant; but the immortal fame of the Greeks is none other than their due, in consideration of the noble cause for which deliverance was achieved. In the history of the world it is not the (subjective individual) valour that has been displayed, nor the so-called merit of the combatants, but the importance of the cause itself, that must decide the fame of the achievement. In the case before us, the interest of the world's history hung trembling in the balance. Oriental despotism—a world united under one lord and sovereign—on the one side, and separate states—insignificant in extent and resources, but animated by free individuality—on the other side, stood front to front in array of battle. Never in history has the superiority of spiritual power over material bulk—and that of no contemptible amount—been made so gloriously manifest. This war and the subsequent development of the states which took the lead in it, is the most brilliant period of Greece. Every thing which the Greek principle involved then reached its perfect bloom and came into the light of day." (Hegel, "The Greek World," p. 268.)

Art in literature distinguished the Hellenic race no less than their work in marble and stone. They created a language subtle, far-reaching, and flexible, and fit to give expression to every form of literature. These forms, lyrical, epic, dramatic, historical, philosophical, they indeed created, and were, and still are, teachers of mankind.

Finally let me direct your attention to the attitude of the Hellenic mind to knowledge in its widest range. What a contrast to the nations we have spoken of in past chapters. Prof. Butcher, of Edinburgh, in his inaugural address describes it better than I can in the following words: "The Greeks, before any other people of antiquity, possessed the love of knowledge for its own sake. To see things as they really are, to discern their meanings and adjust their relations, was with them an instinct and a passion. Their methods in science and philosophy might be very faulty, and their conclusions often absurd, but they had that fearlessness of intellect which is the first condition of seeing truly. Poets and philosophers alike looked with unflinching eye on all that met them, on man and the world, on life and death. They interrogated Nature, and sought to wrest her secrets from her, without

misgiving and without afterthought. They took no count of the consequences. 'Let us follow the argument whithersoever it leads,' may be taken not only as the motto of the Platonic philosophy, but as expressing one side of the Greek genius.

"The Eastern nations, speaking generally, had loved to move in a region of twilight, content with that half-knowledge which stimulates the religious sense. They had thought it impious to draw aside the veil which hides God from man. They had shrunk in holy awe from the study of causes, from enquiries into origin, from explaining the perplexed ways of the universe. Ignorance has been the sacred duty of the layman. 'I have not shown an indiscreet curiosity,' was part of the Egyptian confession of faith made by the naked soul in the under-world before its judges. Scientific questioning and discovery could hardly exist where (as in many parts of the East) each fresh grain of earth was thought to be so much robbery of heaven."

One quotation more, and this time from Ranke's "History of the World": "There is," he says (VIII. 7.), "something almost miraculous in this simultaneous or nearly simultaneous appearance of such different types of genius accomplishing in poetry, philosophy, and history the greatest feats which the human mind has ever performed. Each is original and strikes out his own line, but all work in harmony. By one or the other of these masters are set forth all the greatest problems concerning things divine and human. Athens rejoiced in the possession of a theatre the like of which, for sport or earnest, has never been seen in any other city. The people lived in the constant enjoyment of the noblest dramatic productions. Sophocles was not dispossessed by Euripides: their works appeared at the same time on the stage. The history of Herodotus was read aloud in public meetings. Thucydides was reserved for more private study, but his works had a wide circulation in writing."

Enough for our purpose has now been said about the Greeks to those at least whose past studies have been to any extent classical. Here, you see, we enter upon a still higher and richer development of that Aryan tendency which we noted in the Persian. A strong and joyous personality, and its free and beautiful development, are the leading ideas. We are not surprised to read Aristotle's words in which, speaking for all Greece, he tells us

that the aim of life is "living happily and beautifully." (Pol. III. 9. 14.) They believed in the essential beneficence of Nature and thought life well worth living. Adamantius, the physician, says "they were the most beautiful eyed of all races," and we can well believe it.

To the Greek, external nature, full of gods, was a reflection of his own happy type of humanity—neither better nor worse. Above all other races before or since they seem to have *lived*. It was their intense sense of life and the joy in life that lay at the bottom of their "zeal for activity," as the German historian Curtius well says.

But, let us now for a moment try to get rid of the Hellenic glamour and contemplate the other side of the picture:

There can be no doubt that the Greeks, and above all the Athenian Greeks, were light-minded and frivolous, easily swayed hither and thither, vain, of a shallow morality, untruthful, scheming, and pleasure-loving, with a strong tendency to licentiousness.

The position of women was far from being what we should have expected to have grown out of the well-known scene between Hector and Andromache, and many incidents in the Odyssey. The women spent their time in looking after their domestic concerns and sat in a room set apart for them—the gynecæum—which was half boudoir, half a day-nursery. They sewed, wove, and embroidered. The chief glory of an Athenian woman was that she should not be talked about. The husbands regarded their wives as quite inferior creatures, fit only to look after the house and bear children. They themselves spent their time in the streets, gymnasia, and places of public resort, or in banquetings at each other's houses, or visiting purchasable women, who seem to have been numerous in all Greek towns except Sparta, and some of whom, like Aspasia, were women of high accomplishments and held "salons," frequented by all the literary, artistic, and political men who could secure invitations.

Their democratic equality, again, notwithstanding the overshadowing influence of the Areopagus and the presence, after a certain date, of powerful hereditary families who endeavoured to lead the mass, led to quarrelsomeness and jobbery within their own cities and constant little wars with their fellow Greeks. They had not, as we have seen, a deep, religious sense and were

consequently deficient in reverence. They were not capable of that feeling of obligation to abstract law which marked the Roman. Their true religion was Art: the becoming, the fit, and the beautiful were truly their gods. Hence, they could not sacrifice their narrow civic interests to the idea of Hellenic nationality. The Delphi and the Olympic games were their only living points of unity.

It would almost seem as if Lycurgus saw the kind of creature he had to deal with and resolved to discipline them tightly and subject them at Sparta to a civic system, which was at once school and camp, and so mould, out of the facile Greek nature, the stern and upright Spartan. And for a time he succeeded.

Let us not forget, however, that it was these very Hellenic characteristics which made it possible for them to be artists, historians, and bold, speculative inquirers into all things human and divine. Humanity, in short, in all its breadth and variety was represented to us in this versatile race, free from the overshadowing idea of God and eternal law. It was probably only character of the Greek type, and that under Greek conditions, that was compatible with the work they did for humanity. They had to pay the price of their defects that they might gain art and philosophy for themselves and mankind. They were gifted with a genius for *expression* and this in every kind of human emotion and every department of intellectual activity, and whatever they attempted they succeeded in doing in the best possible way. To them we owe our logic and philosophy, the beginnings of science, the advancement of mathematics, the arts of sculpture, architecture, and painting in their finest forms, history, poetry and the drama. It is when contemplating the vast and various contributions which the Hellenes made to the life of humanity that Shelley beautifully says:—

“Within the circuit of this pendant orb
There lies an antique region, on which fell
The dews of thought, in the world's golden dawn,
Earliest and most benign; and from it sprung
Temples and cities and immortal forms,
And harmonies of wisdom and of song,
And thoughts, and deeds worthy of thoughts so fair:
And when the sun of its dominion failed,
And when the winter of its glory came,
The winds that stripped it bare blew on and swept
That dew into the utmost wildernesses
In wandering clouds of sunny rain that thawed
The unmaternal bosom of the North.”

—FROM THE PROLOGUE TO HELLAS.

CHAPTER II.

*The Greek Ideal of Manhood and the Consequent Characteristics of Hellenic Education Generally.**

As a necessary introduction to the understanding of the Hellenic ideal let me point out what is little more than logical deduction from what we have already said. The genuine Greek did not make any real distinction between a virtuous life and a beautiful and happy one. Virtue doubtless was the condition of happiness; but virtue itself meant a nature in harmony with itself and its external relations. Thus we may truly say that it was not the abstract good of Plato which governed the ethical conceptions of the Greeks, but the beautiful as another expression for harmony. Hence the compound word *kulokagathia*. But inasmuch as the Greek mind was essentially concrete, it included in the idea of human beauty the outer expression and bearing of the man.

The oldest form of Greek life was the Dorian.† The chief representatives of the Doric tribes were the Cretans and Spartans and consequently we are justified in looking among them for the primitive laws, customs, and beliefs of the Hellenic race. If the Dorians were the first to form civic communities, we can easily understand that whatever their national temperament and unconscious life-aims might be, these would be subordinated to the necessity of maintaining the existence of their rising communities in the midst of hostile races. Hence the pure Hellenic spirit would be subordinated in them to military requirements. And so we find.

In the education of the Dorians it is Sparta with which we have chiefly to do. Unlovely as at first sight the Spartan character and constitution seem, we must never forget that the Spartans were yet Hellenes and that the Greek spirit, which reached its finest expression in Athens, animated them also—only subdued in their

* *Authorities.* Müller's Dorians, Becker, Schmidt, Encyclopædias, Krause, Wilkins, Cape, Mahaffy, Cramer, Grasberger (especially). The *loci classici* in Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Lucian. The more recent histories of Greece. The final revision has been made after perusing Paul Girard's elaborate Monograph, Ussing, and "Home Life in Greece."

† It is unnecessary to refer to the Aeolic here.

case by a sterner sense of duty, by an arbitrary state-supremacy over the individual citizen, and a conservative attachment to the older and simpler conceptions of the Hellenic race. They were of the past. Among them we find supreme attachment to the State, as the central motive force in the individual life, much more strongly expressed than among the Athenians; but it is still held by them in union with a deep sense of personal freedom—achieved through the State and *contra mundum*. For the fundamental characteristics of the Hellenic mind were not here wanting. “In the genuine Doric form of government,” says Müller, (“Dorians,” II, p. 6.) “there were certain predominant ideas, which were peculiar to that race, and were also expressed in the worship of Apollo, viz.: these of becomingness or graceful expression, (*eukosmia*); of self-control and moderation (*sophrosyne*); and of manly virtue (*arete*). Accordingly, the constitution was formed for the education as well of the old as of the young; and in a Doric State, education was, upon the whole, a subject of greater importance than government. And for this reason all attempts to explain the legislation of Lycurgus from partial views and considerations have necessarily failed. That external happiness and enjoyment were not the aim of these institutions was soon perceived.” Again he says (II. 3. 1.)—“We may say that the Doric State was a body of men, acknowledging one strict principle of order, and one unalterable rule of manners; and so subjecting themselves to this system that scarcely anything was unfettered by it; but every action was influenced and regulated by the recognised principles.” But in carrying out his scheme of discipline Lycurgus was not, Plutarch says, “himself unduly austere; it was he who dedicated, says Sossibius, the little statue of Laughter or Mirth, which was introduced occasionally at their suppers and places of common entertainment, to serve as a sort of sweetmeat to accompany their strict and hard life.” *

The ultimate *aim* of the State-regulations, however, was such as we have quoted from Müller, and had a conscious ideal of manhood in view. Müller maintains that up to the time of the Persian Wars (let us say even up to 450 B. C.) all mental excellence flourished at Sparta, and it was to this branch of the Hellenic race that we owe some of the lyrical poets.

* Life of Lycurgus.

We must recognise the Cretan and Spartan education as the oldest to take shape among the Hellenic races, and we would, accordingly, fain find among them the ideas which lay at the root of all Hellenic life. I think we do find them as summed up in the three expressions I have already quoted from Müller, *arete*, *sophrosyne*, and *eukosmia*. Indeed, I seem to see in these the basis of all Greek life whatsoever, even in its finest forms; and, as the basis of their life, they must also have been, more or less consciously, the aim of their education. The Athenian, *to kalon kai t'agathon* simply summed up these characteristics in different words. This was the Greek ideal.

The Hellenic ideal of man was inseparable from his state-ideal. The Greek child, speaking generally, was brought up for the service of the State. The individual existed for the State. The civic idea was dominant, just as in China the *family* idea was and is dominant, and in India the caste idea, in Egypt the class idea,* among the Jews the theological idea, and among the Persians the virile military idea. But we must remember that, whatever was the form of government the numerous separate states of Greece were free; and that if there was, among the Dorians, an apparently arbitrary moulding of the mind of youth what was done was done by the citizens themselves, in a free Greek spirit. In Sparta, such was the instinctive capacity of the people themselves for the ideal, that the conditions of qualification for citizenship were necessarily good, as being determined by that ideal. Even the importance of bodily training was recognised with a view to a true manly product apart from the relation of gymnastics to the national defence, although this latter object was necessarily more pronounced among the Dorian than among the Ionic races. But even among the Dorians we must not concentrate our attention so exclusively on the gymnastic side of their training as to lose sight of its moral element. The aim of the severe discipline under which they were brought up was to produce obedience, self-sacrifice, courage, promptitude, self-reliance, and a single-eyed concentration on the immediate purpose of all action. Thus was produced a self-controlled and victorious man. Accordingly, I conclude that while the requirements of the State among the Doric

* The caste-system in its strict sense was not existent there.

racess dominated and controlled the processes of education; yet that, inasmuch as these requirements could only be satisfied by the rearing of citizens who were virtuous, self-controlled, and possessed of the graces of manner as well as physically well-grown, the requirements of the State were also the highest possible even in the interests of the individual. Thus free development of the individual and the service of the State were in truth, within certain limits, harmonized.

Among the Athenians also, and, in truth, in all Hellenic communities, the citizens lived for the State which was supreme, but it is necessary here to emphasize a distinction between the races:—

Among the Doric races, and notably in Sparta, the State existed as a great educational institution and citizens were deliberately formed after a certain pattern. Among the Ionic races and especially the Attic, on the other hand, the education was not state-education in any proper sense; there was no state-system, and the idea and aims of the State consequently less controlled the education given. The individual was educated in the first instance for himself—with a view to his own full and free development—and only secondarily for the State. The best materials for citizens is better than a second-rate manufactured citizen, even from the point of view of public policy. In short a development of body and mind, so that the one should serve the other, and both work in subjection to the ideas of “self-control, moral excellence, and the becoming,” and thus give to the State a *harmonious man*, was the Attic idea of education. The Dorian thought, on the contrary, *first* of the State in its integrity, and in the second place, only of the man. But, as I have pointed out, his requirements for the man were conceived in a true Hellenic spirit.

It appears from these remarks that it is among the Ionic races, above all in Attica, that we find arising, for the first time in the history of the world, a wholly new conception of human life, and consequently, a new conception of the end of education. With the Chinese, obedience to precepts and customs with a view to civic order and the more common social virtues, is the highest aim; the Persian was trained to be truthful, generous, and brave for himself as well as for the State, and with these virtues there was a spirit of free individualism; the Ionian Greek, however,

formed a conception of the ideal for each man, which ideal was to be *freely* sought—an ideal much higher than any that had preceded it, because it aimed at manly dignity and harmony of nature—mind and body. All authority of the State proceeded *from the individual citizen* in his free development and activity.

Another distinction between the Dorian and Attic is worthy of mention: The laws of Lycurgus imposed the education of the free citizen as a duty on the State, just as the laws of Solon at Athens imposed it as a duty on each *father of a family*. Herein lies a significant difference.

To fix the date of the first schools in Greece is difficult, but we do not go too far back when we fix it at 600 B. C. in Athens. According to Plutarch almost every free citizen received at least elementary instruction so early as the time of Aristides, who died 467 B. C. The Spartan education, if organised along with the Spartan State, must have dated from about 850 B. C.

The Hellenic races, generally, endeavored to realize their ideal by means of the two educational instruments, music and gymnastic. Under the head of music falls literature as well as music in its narrower sense; and I would further point out that music in its narrower sense even, embraced, (among the Dorians especially), religious training, because of its connexion with choral singing and the worship of the gods.

Such being the general character and aim of Greek life and Greek education, let us now consider in detail the means that were taken to train the youth of the country, beginning with the oldest Greek system—the Doric as exemplified in Crete and Sparta—a system towards which both Xenophon and Plato, weary of licentious democracies, were disposed to look back with some longing. And yet, spite of Plato and Xenophon, it is in the Attic life and education that the modern world must ever recognise the true Hellenic spirit.

But before going into further detail, it is necessary to ask you always to bear in mind that national education did not mean in any part of Hellas what it means in Europe now. Those who were free citizens or burgesses were alone regarded as forming integral parts of the State, the larger number of the inhabitants—composed of foreign residents and slaves—being excluded. In Sparta, for ex-

ample, at its best period, the subject residents, including the Helots, were three times as numerous as the true citizens. In Attica again the total population was about 500,000, and of these only 100,000 were citizens. It has also to be premised that the education that was given, both at Sparta and Athens, was the instinctive product of the life of the people, not the deliberate result of educational discussion and theory.

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